



TESTIMONY

Submitted by Anellie Reed, BSN, RN
Administrator

All Pointe Home Care

H.B. No. 5040 AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES

March 1, 2022

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Anellie Reed, Administrator of All Pointe HomeCare. I am testifying today regarding:

- **H.B. 5040: An Act Concerning the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Human Services.**

All Pointe Homecare offers a variety of home care services including intermittent skilled care for medication management of adults and pediatric patients.

Mental illnesses are significantly increasing and so is the prevalence of chronic psychiatric patients. As a result of this increase, chronic psychiatric disorders impose a significant burden to patients and their families. Home healthcare services for medication management can significantly reduce the burden on the patients, their families, and the healthcare system. Adding the impact of mental health illness often results in patients having trouble managing their medications, which may lead to non-adherence resulting in Emergency Department visits and hospitalization. Home healthcare can significantly reduce the costs of managing these patients at home while improving their quality of life. In addition, home healthcare minimizes the burden on outpatient services and supports a more independent life for the patient and the family.

Medication management can also benefit children with medical conditions such as Diabetes. All Pointe HomeCare has a specialty program addressing the needs of diabetic children that are not adhering to their medication regimen. We work closely with the Connecticut Children's Center to establish a plan that involves strict diabetes and medication management. Psychosocial considerations have to be made for these clients, as there are often barriers that limit the ability for the patient to achieve success in their diabetes management. By providing daily home health skilled care, the client is able manage their disease consistently which helps them gain control over their blood sugars (lower A1C) and prevent hospitalizations. Another cost savings as we help to keep patients out of the hospital.

In order to deliver these services to our behavioral/medical health clients, we need qualified skilled nursing professionals. The role of the nurse that provides these services is very complex. The clinician must have a strong knowledge base of caring for the behavioral health client as well as the action, side effects and potential interactions of medications. During each skilled nursing visit, the nurse evaluates the patient's mental health status and the efficacy of the medications being administered.

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However, our resources are limited due to low reimbursement rates for these services. Our agency currently has a higher percentage of patients needing services than the availability of staff. We cannot compete with other care providers who can pay more and offer better benefits.

In 2016, the home health medication administration rate was cut by 15%. The recent ARPA funding has invested 4.5% back to the providers leaving a 10.5% shortage. Given the rise in Mental Health Illnesses and the inability to hire qualified nursing staff due to inability to compete for salaries, we are here before you respectfully asking you to consider increasing the medication administration reimbursement rate by 10.5%. This increase will be invested directly to the workforce, by increasing wages, offering competitive benefits, providing extensive training, oversight, and retention.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Feel free to contact me with any question.

Regards,

Annellie Reed, RN, BSN

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Administrator